

# *Documents on Diplomacy: The Source*

## *A New Policy of Boldness*

*Excerpts from an Article by John Foster Dulles in "Life" Magazine, May 19, 1952*

Soviet Communism confronts our nation with its gravest peril. To meet its long-term strategy of encirclement and strangulation, we have adopted a series of emergency measures which are fantastically costly not only in money but in their warping of our American way of life.

No one would begrudge the cost of what we are doing if, in fact, it was adequate and was ending the peril, and if there was no better way. Actually, our policies are inadequate in scope. They are not ending the peril. There is a better way.

The costs of our present policies are perilously high in money, in freedom and in friendships.

The Administration's "security policies" would this year cost us, in money, about 60 billion, of which about 99% goes for military purposes and for equipment (which will quickly become obsolete and demand replacement indefinitely). Such gigantic expenditures unbalance our budget and require taxes so heavy that they discourage incentive. They so cheapen the dollar that savings, pensions, and Social Security reserves have already lost much of their value.

What is worse, this concentration on military matters is—to use George Washington's words—"inauspicious to liberty." It leads to encroachments on civil rights and transfers from the civilian to the military decisions which profoundly affect our domestic life and our foreign relations.

We are also rapidly expending our friendships and prestige in the world. Increasing numbers turn away from our policies as too militaristic, too costly, too erratic and too inconclusive for them to follow. Our far-flung, extravagant and surreptitious military projects are frightening many who feel that we are conducting a private feud with Russia, which may endanger them, rather than performing a public service for peace. . . .

Our present negative policies will never end the type of sustained offensive which Soviet Communism is mounting; they will never end the peril nor bring relief from the exertions which devour our economic, political and moral vitals. Ours are treadmill

policies which, at best, might perhaps keep us in the same place until we drop exhausted. . . .

Where do we go from here?

A nation with our resourcefulness should be able to devise better policies. But we cannot take it for granted that better policies will automatically result from a change of Administrations. Conceivably policies could be worse rather than better. . . .

Looked at in any impartial way, we are the world's greatest and strongest power. The only commodity in which we seem deficient is faith. In all material things we have a productivity far exceeding that of Russia: our steel production is about three and one half times that of the Soviet Union, and in aluminum, petroleum and electric power our superiority is even greater. Our people have a standard of education, an inventive talent and a technical skill unmatched by any of the peoples under Soviet rule.

On the Soviet side a dozen people in the Kremlin are attempting to rule 800 million human beings—while trying to conquer more. All except a privileged few work under conditions which sternly deny them the "pursuit of happiness." Within Russia itself the discontent can be judged by the 15 million prisoners in forced labor camps—more than twice the membership of the Soviet Communist party. Even the leaders are suspicious of each other as each wonders whether the other plots his purge.

In satellite countries, such as Poland and Czechoslovakia, the situation is worse, because there it is aggravated by the repression of patriotism. Leaders in the Czech Communist party have been liquidated one after another. In China the party tries to frighten the people into subjection by staging wholesale public executions.

All of this reflects not strength but weakness. The "dictatorship of the proletariat" is like other tyrannies that went before. They may present a formidable exterior, but they are "like unto whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness."

The free should not be numbed by the sight of this vast graveyard of human liberties. It is the despots who should feel haunted. They, not we, should fear the future.

As we stop fretting and start thinking, the first problem to tackle is the strictly military one. It comes in the form of a paradox: for we must seek a military formula more effective than any devised to date; that we may no longer be so over-ridingly preoccupied with purely military necessity.

The dimensions of the problem are plain: at least 3,000,000 Soviet soldiers regularly under arms, another 3,000,000 to 4,000,000 in the Chinese Red armies. These forces, poised in a central area could strike with massive power east, south or west at any one of more than 20 nations along the 20,000-mile boundary which runs from near Alaska down by Japan, through East Asia and South Asia, along the Middle and Near East to Europe and up through Central Europe to the North Cape. . . .

Those who think only of Western Europe and of making it "impregnable:—without regard to the Near, Middle and Far East and Africa—are just as blind as those who think only of the United States and of making it "impregnable." Policies that do not defend freedom in Asia are fatally defective.

How do we defend it? Obviously, we cannot build a 20,000-mile Maginot Line or match the Red armies, man for man, gun for gun and tank for tank at any particular time or place their general staff selects. To attempt that would mean real strength nowhere and bankruptcy everywhere.

There is one solution and only one: that is for the free world to develop the will and organize the means to retaliate instantly against open aggression by Red armies, so that, if it occurred anywhere, we could and would strike back where it hurts, by means of our choosing.

The principle involved is as simple as that of our municipal police forces. We do not station armed guards at every house to stop aggressors—that would be economic suicide—but we deter potential aggressors by making it probably that if they aggress, they will lose in punishment more than they can gain by aggression. . . .

Today atomic energy, coupled with strategic air and sea power, provides the community of free nations with vast new possibilities of organizing a community power to stop open aggression before it starts and reduce, to the vanishing point, the risk of general war. So far these weapons are merely part of national arsenals for use in fighting general war when it has come. If that catastrophe occurs, it will be because we have allowed these new and awesome forces to become the ordinary killing tools of the soldier when, in the hands of the statesmen, they could serve as effective political weapons in defense of the peace.

This does not mean that old ways of defending the peace should be abandoned where they can still be efficacious. The United States should maintain a strong military force of a kind befitting our responsibilities. . . .

But these old methods are quite inadequate to match the 20,000-mile scope of the present military peril; and if we strain to make them adequate, we shall succumb to the twin evils of militarism and bankruptcy. New methods of defense are needed to save the free nations from the dilemma, which present policies impose, of choosing between murder from without or suicide from within.

That is the enlightened and effective way to proceed. It is a way that we can afford to live with, and until there is effective international disarmament, it is the way we cannot afford to live without.

Once the free world has established a military defense, it can undertake what has been too long delayed—a political defense.

It is ironic and wrong that we who believe in the boundless power of human freedom should so long have accepted a static political role. It is also ironic and wrong that we who so proudly profess regard for the spiritual should rely so utterly on material defenses while the avowed materialists have been waging a winning war with social ideas, stirring humanity everywhere.

There are three truths which we need to recall in these times:

1. The dynamic prevails over the static; the active over the passive. We were from the beginning a vigorous, confident people, born with a sense of destiny and of mission. That is why we have grown from a small and feeble nation to our present stature in the world.
2. Nonmaterial forces are more powerful than those that are merely material. Our dynamism has always been moral and intellectual rather than military or material. During most of our national life we had only a small military establishment and during the last century we had to borrow money abroad to develop our expanding economy. But we always generated political, social and industrial ideas and projected them abroad where they were more explosive than dynamite.
3. There is a moral or natural law not made by man which determines right and wrong and in the long run only those who conform to that law will escape disaster. This law has been trampled by the Soviet rulers, and for that violation they can and should be made to pay. This will happen when we ourselves keep faith with that law in our practical decisions of policy.

We should let these truths work in and through us. We should be dynamic, we should use ideas as weapons; and these ideas should conform to moral principles. That we do this is right, for it is the inevitable expression of a faith—and I am confident that we still do have a faith. But it is also expedient in defending ourselves against an aggressive, imperialistic despotism. For even the present lines will not hold unless our purpose goes beyond confining Soviet Communism within its present orbit.

Consider the situation of the 20-odd non-Western nations which are next door to the Soviet world. . . . Today they live close to despair because the United States, the historic leader of the forces of freedom, seems dedicated to the negative policy of “containment” and “stalemate.”

As a matter of fact, some highly competent work is being done, at one place or another, to promote liberation. Obviously such activities do not lend themselves to public exposition. But liberation from the yoke of Moscow will not occur for a very long time, and courage in neighboring lands will not be sustained, unless the United States makes it publicly known that it wants and expects liberation to occur. The mere statement of that wish and expectation would change, in an electrifying way, the mood of the captive peoples. It would put heavy new burdens on the jailers and create new opportunities for liberation.

Here are some specific acts which we could take:

1. We could make it clear, on the highest authority of the President and the congress, that U.S. policy seeks as one of its peaceful goals the eventual restoration of genuine independence in the nations of Europe and Asia now dominated by Moscow, and that we will not be a party to any “deal” confirming the rule of Soviet despotism over the alien people which it now dominates.

2. We could welcome the creation of the free world of political “task forces” to develop a freedom program for each of the captive nations. Each group would be made up of those who are proved patriots, who have practical resourcefulness and who command confidence and respect at home and abroad.
3. We could stimulate the escape from behind the Iron Curtain of those who can help to develop these programs.
4. The activities of the Voice of America and such private committees as those for Free Europe and Free Asia could be coordinated with these freedom programs. The agencies would be far more effective if given concrete jobs to do.
5. We could coordinate our economic, commercial and cultural relations with the freedom programs, cutting off or licensing intercourse as seemed most effective from time to time.
6. We could end diplomatic relations with present governments which are in fact only puppets of Moscow, if and when that would promote the freedom programs.
7. We could seek to bring other free nations to unite with us in proclaiming, in a great new Declaration of Independence, our policies toward the captive nations.

We do now want a series of bloody uprisings and reprisals. There can be peaceful separation from Moscow, as Tito showed, and enslavement can be made so unprofitable that the master will let go his grip. Such results will not come to pass overnight. But we can know, for history proves, that the spirit of patriotism burns unquenched in Poles, Czechs, Hungarians, Romanians, Bulgarians, Chinese and others, and we can be confident that within two, five or 10 years substantial parts of the present captive world can peacefully regain national independence. That will mark the beginning of the end of Soviet despotism’s attempt at world conquest. ■

### *Source*

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